



# Department of Justice

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## **Justice Department Moves to Deport Former Nazi Policeman** **Who Participated in Wartime Persecution of Jews**

WASHINGTON—The Justice Department has asked an immigration judge in Chicago to enter an order directing the deportation of Osyp Firishchak, a Chicago resident who served during World War II in the Nazi-sponsored Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (UAP) in German-occupied L'viv, announced Alice S. Fisher, Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division. That city, now in western Ukraine, was part of Poland until 1939.

"The UAP actively participated in confining, terrorizing, and then annihilating the Jews of L'viv," said Assistant Attorney General Fisher. "In seeking the removal of an individual who participated in the Third Reich's notorious operations against Jewish civilians in L'viv, we reaffirm the principle that the United States will not be a haven for Nazi criminals."

A charging document filed by the Criminal Division's Office of Special Investigations (OSI) alleges that Firishchak joined the UAP on Oct. 25, 1941, a few months after the Nazis occupied the city of L'viv, and that he remained in UAP service until shortly before the Nazis and their collaborators fled L'viv in July 1944 in the face of advancing Soviet troops.

Firishchak, now 87, entered the United States in 1949 and became a U.S. citizen in 1954.

A denaturalization lawsuit was filed against Firishchak by OSI in December 2003. In August 2005 a U.S. District Court Judge in Chicago stripped Firishchak of his U.S. citizenship ruling that Firishchak "was a participant in an organization that perpetrated some of the most horrific acts against human decency ever known in history." He found that Firishchak routinely enforced Nazi anti-Jewish policies in L'viv, took part in operations to "reduce" the Jewish ghetto's population, and hunted for Jews who attempted to hide or flee. "Firishchak's shameless attempt to excuse himself from an inexcusable act is cowardly," the judge wrote. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit affirmed the district court's decision last year. The charging document cites that denaturalization decision as establishing the facts of Firishchak's participation in the Nazi-sponsored persecution of Jews while serving in the UAP in L'viv.

During the three years of Firishchak's service, German occupation authorities enacted a series of increasingly repressive measures against the city's Jews, leading to their ghettoization and ultimately to their mass murder. The Jews of L'viv were first forced to surrender property and wear armbands identifying them as Jews. UAP men routinely enforced these measures, and arrested those Jews who failed to comply. Later, UAP personnel helped forcibly relocate the city's Jews to an enclosed ghetto, where they lived under horribly inhumane conditions that caused thousands to die from disease, starvation and abuse. Many were used as slave laborers, and large numbers were worked to death.

German authorities then steadily reduced the ghetto's population by deploying the UAP along with other forces in a series of often bloody operations to seize and forcibly deport

thousands of Jews. These victims were sent either to the Belzec killing center for execution in the camp's gas chambers, to specially designated sites at which they were shot to death en masse, or to forced labor or concentration camps, where most subsequently died of starvation, disease, overwork or mistreatment. Ultimately, the entire ghetto was emptied in this manner, and fewer than 2,000 of the city's 130,000 Jews survived the war.

"The Nazis and their collaborators in L'viv killed over 100,000 men, women, and children whose only 'crime' was being Jewish," said OSI Director Eli M. Rosenbaum. "Actions like the one taken in the Firishchak case reflect the Justice Department's unwavering commitment to pursuing justice on behalf of the victims of the Holocaust and other egregious human rights violations."

Since OSI began operations in 1979, it has won cases against 104 participants in Nazi crimes of persecution, stripping them of U.S. citizenship and/or removing them from this country. In addition, over 175 individuals implicated in wartime Axis crimes have been blocked from entering the United States in recent years as a result of OSI's "Watch List" program, which is enforced in cooperation with the Department of Homeland Security.

Members of the public are reminded that the charging document contains only allegations and that the government will be required to prove its case before an immigration judge.

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